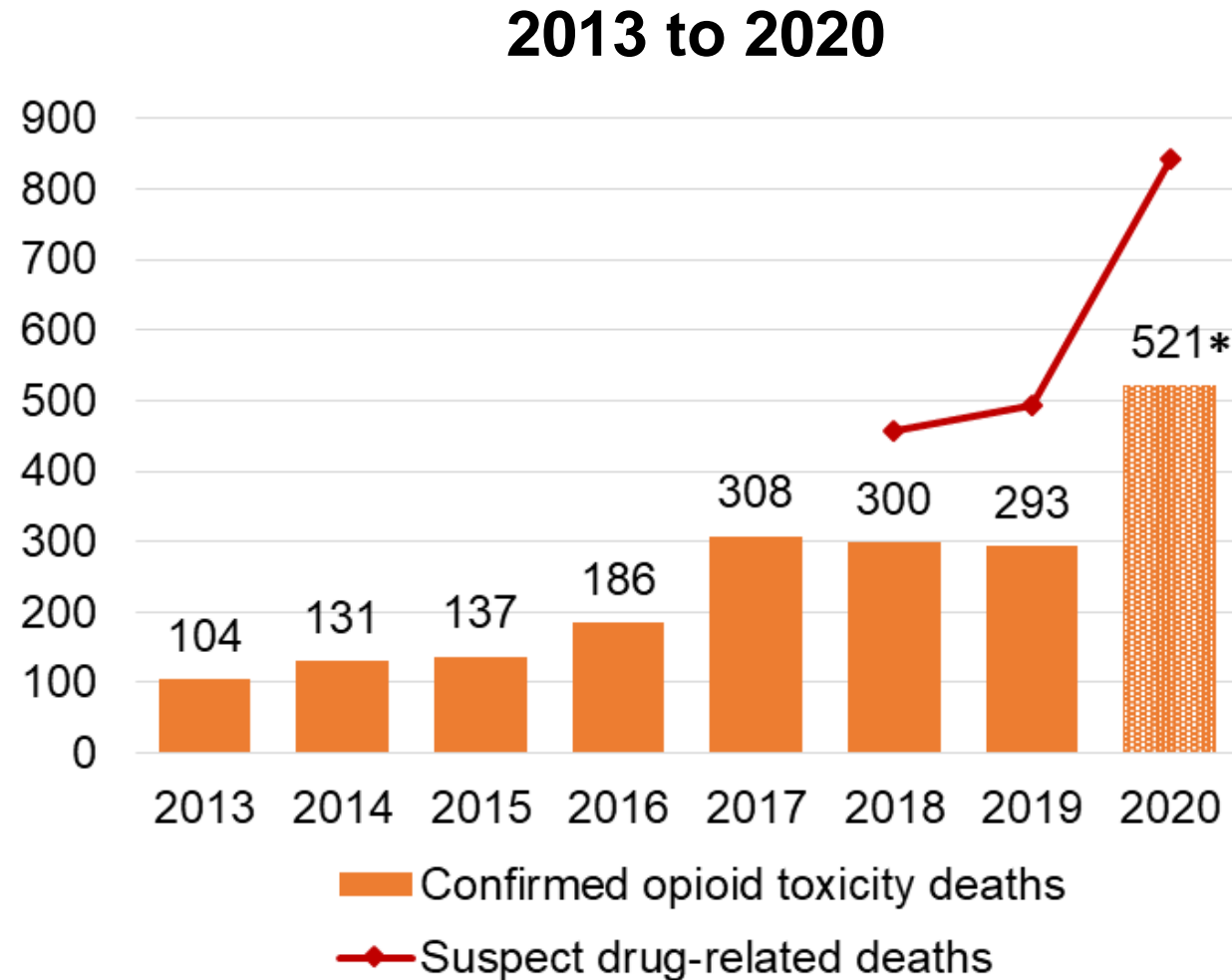


Toronto Overdose Action Plan: Status Report 2021

Board of Health

June 14, 2021

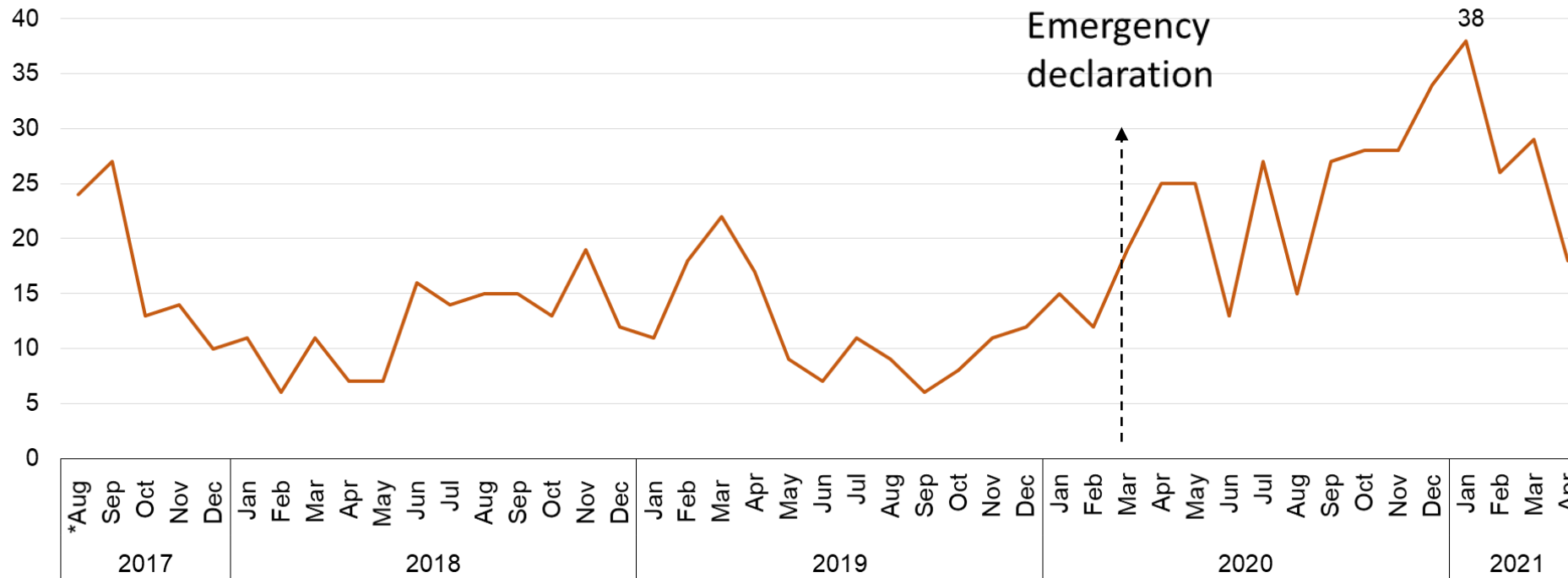
Suspect drug-related and confirmed opioid toxicity deaths in Toronto



**Preliminary data. Numbers are expected to change as coroners complete investigations.*

Sources: Public Health Ontario and Office of the Chief Coroner for Ontario

Fatal suspected opioid overdoses attended by paramedics



- The ongoing opioid poisoning crisis continues to worsen during the COVID-19 pandemic
- Deaths involving all substances in Toronto have increased to record highs: what we are facing is now most accurately described as a drug poisoning crisis

Worsening crisis

- increasingly toxic unregulated drug supply
- reduced service hours/capacity
- criminalization

Actions have been taken

- more are needed
- situation remains urgent, continues to worsen

Highlights of action taken - 1

- Safer supply initiatives
- Grief and loss supports
- Harm reduction and treatment services
- Community alerts and info sharing
- Shelters: Integrated Prevention and Harm Reduction initiative (iPHARE)

Highlights of action taken - 2

- Indigenous harm reduction training: collaboration with 2-Spirited People of the 1st Nations
- Funding for community-based overdose prevention and response initiatives
- Toronto Academic Health Science Network/Toronto Public Health Opioid Task Force: proposal
- Harm Reduction Policy at Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Decriminalization advocacy

Federal government

- decriminalize possession of all drugs for personal use
- declare the drug poisoning crisis a national public health emergency and develop a coordinated Canada-wide plan
- continue to support safer supply initiatives
- support capacity building regarding reducing harms of stimulant use

Provincial government

- convene a task force
- scale up prevention, harm reduction, and treatment services
- support a spectrum of safer supply options
- fund a Substance Use Crisis Centre and a systems-level approach to addressing the drug poisoning crisis

Federal and Provincial governments

- provide a long-term financial commitment to assist the City of Toronto in creating and operating more affordable and supportive homes for people in need, including people who use drugs

Board of Health

- recognize the drug poisoning crisis as a public health crisis in the City of Toronto and commit to supporting action

Medical Officer of Health

- convene a working group to develop alternative approach to criminal sanctions
- this would be a step towards requesting an exemption

Toronto Public Health remains committed to working with our community and institutional partners to improve our collective response to the drug poisoning crisis.